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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 23 October 1985, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. DE PINIÉS (Spain)

later: Mr. MOSELEY (Vice-President) (Barbados)

- Commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations [39] (continued)

Statements were made by:

General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

General António Ramalho Eanes, President of the Portuguese Republic

The Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada

Mr. Jacques Santer, Prime Minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

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(President Ramalho Eanes)

The deep and close link between the Portuguese national conscience and the major objectives of the Charter have led public opinion in my country to attach special significance to the coincidence between the celebration of the anniversary of the United Nations and the entry of Portugal into this Organization. All the more so because around the same time we were granted membership we were entrusted with important international functions in the long, complex and so often dramatic process of decolonization, in which an important role was played by decisions of this General Assembly, as a result of which the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples is also being commemorated.

Today, the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic, which specifically stipulates respect for the right of peoples to self-determination, embodies the responsibilities which are still incumbent upon my country in this domain, namely, those concerning the destiny of the territory of East Timor, in full compliance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

Indeed, 30 years after its admission to this Organization, Portugal remains bound by obligations that stem from the task then entrusted to it. We shall continue to fulfil those obligations as an Administering Power for as long as the United Nations decides to maintain and acknowledge Portugal in this capacity.

In the exercise of such internationally recognized functions, and within the framework of the Charter, Portugal is fully committed to the defence of the rights of the populations of the territories whose interests it is responsible for promoting. In fulfilling such a role, we shall pursue the main objective of assuring equitable treatment to those peoples, with full respect for their historical and cultural identity and their right to progress and development.

(President Ramalho Eanes)

Therefore, until the international community and this Organization decide that those populations are to exercise the right of self-determination - and until they actually exercise it - my country will act so as to guarantee that the right to freedom, dignity and the identity of peoples shall not be reduced to mere rhetoric and that peace shall not become a negligible issue in the light of the selfish consideration of powerful but less relevant interests.

In this context, I wish to convey to the Secretary-General my sincere appreciation, and that of my country, for the valuable, impartial and constant support that, in such arduous circumstances, Portugal is receiving from him in the fulfilment of its functions. Namely, we would like to express our appreciation for the close attention he has paid to the development of the problem of East Timor which - along with the international and historical responsibilities that Portugal does not reject and will never reject - involves the credibility and prestige of this Organization as well as the consistent acceptance of principles so wholeheartedly upheld by the international community.